

With swirling sand ...



Sgt. Christopher Mackenzie (left), of Savannah, Ga., and Chief Warrant Officer Phillip Hosey, of Hattiesburg, Miss., A Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 3rd Aviation Brigade Soldiers, prepare one of the unit's UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters for a flight over the barren Kuwaiti desert Jan. 20. The brigade is training in Kuwait prior to deploying to Taji, Iraq, as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sgt. 1st Class David Abrams

31D aviators fly in tough desert skies

Sgt. 1st Class David Abrams

3rd Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait - With a swirl of sand and dust, the Falcon Brigade has landed here in preparation for its mission during Operation Iraqi Freedom 3.

The 3rd Infantry Division's Aviation Brigade deployed from Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., to Kuwait in January and began training and performing maintenance before crossing the berm into Iraq. They are scheduled to operate out of Taji, Iraq.

Before they arrive in Iraq, however, pilots must log at least two-and-a-half hours of flight time in Kuwait, concentrating on dust landings and night operations.

"The difficulty of flying is actually harder here in Kuwait than in Iraq," said Chief Warrant Officer Matthew Gardner, B Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 3rd Avn. Bde., of Plano, Texas, as he stood in front of his CH-47 Chinook

helicopter. "I compare it to driving down a highway without any headlights on - there's no contrast, no landmarks, nothing to indicate your position in the world. You really have to rely on your instruments and your flight crew."

Ironically, flight conditions improve once pilots cross into Iraq, he added. "There will be more buildings so at least that part of the flying will become easier," Gardner said.

A mile down the Camp Buehring flight line, Sgt. Christopher Mackenzie, A Co., 2/3 Avn., UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter crew chief agreed.

3rd Bn/3rd Avn Reg. Aviator lost in mishap, see page 3

"You don't really have a horizon when you're up in the air," said the Savannah, Ga., resident. "It's like flying in fog. You have to do a lot of cross-checking with your instruments and crew."

See SKIES, Page 7A

IED training

Soldiers prepare for threat

Sgt. Raymond Piper

3rd Inf. Div.

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait — Improvised explosive devices are a continuing threat to the lives of servicemembers and their vehicles. To help combat this threat, Soldiers staging through Kuwait must go through Iraq theater IED and explosive hazards awareness training.

The class provided updated information to the types of tactics that insurgents are using against coalition forces.

The IEDs are being placed along roads with a high volume of coalition traffic. They may be placed in culverts or on the insides of guardrails because they are harder to see and off the ground.

The insurgents have learned to place their IEDs higher because of Humvee uparmor kits so that more of the blast will go into the gunner hatch or less armored portions of the vehicle, said Sgt. Will Alt, explosive hazard trainer.

Some of the other enemy tactics have expanded to adding a fuel mix to the IED so it burns longer and sticks to vehicles, using larger IEDs, complex ambushes following a blast and tandem attacks from both sides of the road.

Another common tactic is that the insurgents will throw improvised hand grenades at vehicles as they pass under overpasses and set garrote lines at gunner height for passing vehicles.

Vehicle borne IEDs have become more common, but there are signs for both the static and mobile VBIED.

Although many people on the road drive fast and recklessly, not every single one will be an attack, Alt said. Most drivers of car bombs are single males so if a woman and a child are in the car, more than likely they are not attacking. Most civilians know the routine and tend to move off to the side of the road for convoys.

But he said, "You can't take any chances, so as a rear gunner you can never let a civilian vehicle get in the convoy."

Static VBIEDs are usually set off the side of the road.

The windows may be blacked out or covered to

See IED, Page 6A

Soldiers drive on with new armor

SpC. Jimmy D. Lane, Jr.

1st Bde.

CAMP NEW YORK, Kuwait - The Army is currently in the process of adding armor to vehicles crossing into Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 3 due to the threat by the Iraqi insurgent's use of improvised explosive devices.

The armor is being installed on vehicles in Kuwait by Department of Defense civilians and civilian contractors. The armor is being added to several different types of tactical vehicles.

"Right now we are applying level two add on armor to all the 1097s, 998s, 1025 and 1026 humvees," said Michael Cannon, the foreman for the forward repair activity at Camp Arifjan.

There are three different levels of armor the civilians and contractors install, Cannon said. Level one, or 1114 armor, is factory installed. It provides 360 degrees of minimum protection. Level two is armor that is add-on armor that is installed by the civilians. The armor is applied to the sides of the vehicle, and has gone through ballistic testing and is

proven to stop certain types of rounds. Level three armor is steel plates that the Soldiers are adding on themselves, but hasn't been tested.

"Level three armor still provides a certain amount of extra protection," Cannon added.

Soldiers were in the back of the garage welding turret skirts around the gunner's position on a two and a half ton truck.

"The armor that is being added on in the back there is strictly for the gunner," Cannon said.

Air conditioning is being installed in the vehicles along with the armor. On a slow day, it can take an entire day to install all the features required.

"It can take up to ten hours max for the vehicle to be brought in, apply the windshield, the armor and the air conditioning. An ambulance doesn't take as long because they already have an air conditioner," Cannon said.

The crews are currently working in two shifts, making it a 24 hour a day, seven day a week operation. The company will be able to do this

See ARMOR, Page 7A



SpC. Jimmy D. Lane, Jr.

A soldier welds armor on to a humvee at Camp New York.

OIF 1 vets give advice on changes

SpC. Jimmy D. Lane, Jr.

1st Bde.

CAMP NEW YORK, Kuwait - More than a few veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom are present in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade for this rotation to OIF 3.

Some of these Soldiers will take the lessons they learned during their first deployment and apply them to situations they are likely to encounter.

"It's going to be different this time," said JeanCarlo Lopez, a HHC, 1st Bde. planning specialist. "It was really hot the first time, so this time I am going to be better prepared for the heat. Before we were lacking a lot of stuff like water. Now I know that I need to stay well hydrated."

Even though new Soldiers will gain knowledge from the veterans, many things have changed since the last deployment to Iraq.

"The first time, you could see the enemy, and You knew who you could engage and who you couldn't," Lopez said.

"Now, it's not the same, it's all improvised explosive devices and ambushes. I guess it's going to be a lot harder now."

One of the things that will be awkward for Lopez is the fact that he feels they will need to be more alert than the first time, he said. "Before, the people were in awe of us, even scared.

This time, they are used to having us around, and they will be braver."

Veterans of the first deployment will also be better equipped mentally to advise the Soldiers who are currently deployed here for the first time.

"Don't look at it as a year process," said Chief Warrant Officer Leonard Norfus, 1st Bde. targeting officer. "You have to take it day by day or you will get

See OIF, Page 7A

Weather Forecast

FRI

High 52° Low 40°

SAT

High 56° Low 50°

SUN

High 70° Low 50°

News



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31D Soldiers, families, friends, cherish final moments before flights

Jennifer Wingfield
Managing Editor

Like the postman, neither rain, frigid temperatures, snow, nor fog bound highways could keep those final moments with significant friends and family for Soldiers apart as they left for Operation Iraqi Freedom 3.

Private Justin Mignogna, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, had his parents Donna and Robert, along with Aunt Darlene and Uncle Bob from New Jersey and New York were in the battalion area to see him off.

"I know that he will be taken care of, through the power of prayer," Donna said. "I am still scared though."

Robert added that he was proud of his son and knows that the training he has received will

see him through it all.

"I am also concerned for his safety, but I support and respect him and all those involved," Darlene said. "I just want them all to come back."

"The Soldiers have had lots of good training and are fully prepared," said 1st Sgt. Hiram Medero, HHOC, STB. "There is a good family readiness group in place and we have weekly meetings. About 45 percent of those deploying are veterans and the spouses know what to expect, so even they can help each other. Time will go by fast and before you know it, the Soldiers will be back."

Capt. Dawn Fick, a STB personnel officer, spent time with her three-year-old St. Clair. When asked what his plans were while mommy is gone, St. Clair responded, "Drive and watch movies."



HHSC, STB Soldiers load baggage and equipment into a truck for transport to their deployment flight Jan. 20.



Photos by Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft

Master Sgt. Anthony Ford spends a moment of reflection with his son Brett, 21 months.



Sgt. Joseph Kirkey and his fiancée, Charity Berger, spend last moments together.



Chaplain (Capt.) Timothy Valentine leads the deploying Soldiers in a prayer before they board the buses that will take them to their deployment flight.



Jennifer Wingfield

Sarah Gannaway watches her husband, Capt. Bruce Gannaway, HHOC, STB, as his bus leaves for the airport.



A Soldier receives his bayonet for his deployment.

Troops deploy in support of OIF 3

Catherine Caruso

Hunter PAO

Shortly after the start of the New Year, airlift operations began in support of the 3rd Infantry Division's return to Iraq.

More than 1000 Soldiers deployed the first week of January.

First Brigade commander Col. Mark McKnight said almost half of the Soldiers in his brigade are already Iraq war veterans.

"There's always great value added value in having Soldiers that have experience in a combat situation. I think the biggest value is at the lowest level, at the NCO level, where they have direct contact with Soldiers who may be newly assigned to the unit, or have never experienced a hazardous or combat situation," McKnight said.

After saying goodbye to friends and family before riding to the flight terminal at Hunter Army Airfield, some Soldiers squeezed in a few more minutes with loved ones via cell phone before boarding.

Pfc. Jennifer Hass, a supply specialist for Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade left a voice mail message for her mother.

"I just hope she takes care and doesn't worry, because she's been real upset lately," Hass said.

Military life, especially duty in a combat zone, has risks. But Hass said she's well prepared to face them.

"I'm not nervous. I mean, if something happens, it's just my time. But it's not going to happen, because I have Sgt. Lawson and everyone around here to take care of me," she said.

Many Soldiers said they'd

been awake all night, trying to make the most of every second they had to spend with their families before they deployed. Some of those troops spent the last few hours before deploying, catching up on that missed sleep. Others dined on the snacks generously provided by volunteers from the American Red Cross, Savannah Smiles, and the USO.

And, some troops found other ways to pass the time. Many said they didn't want to dwell on what, and whom, they were about to leave behind.

"We're just getting a little poker in before we get on the plane. Something to do to pass the time," Pfc. Nathan Miller, a medic for C Co., 3rd Forward Support Bn., said. "Win some money, lose some money. Actually, I'm losing pretty badly. But we're not playing for money."

McKnight said while military families worry about Soldiers, Soldiers overwhelmingly are more worried about their families.

The Army will do it's best to help take care of both, he said.

"The Army has come so far since I first joined it, with family readiness groups, and support structures, the garrisons, that I feel very confident, and you know all the Soldiers feel very confident, that their families that will be staying here, or in other locations in the United States, will be taken care of," he said.

"And there is a continual flow of information between the family readiness group and the Soldiers that are deployed. They know how well they have been trained, and how well they'll be taken care of in the theater of operations. And that they will come home to them."



Photos by Catherine Caruso

Soldiers wait patiently with their gear before boarding the aircraft to Kuwait.

Soldier dies in accident

DOD Release

The Department of Defense announced Monday the death of a Soldier who was supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Captain Joe F. Lusk II, 25, of Reedley, Calif., died Friday in Camp Buehring, Kuwait, of non-combat related injuries. Lusk was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, Fort Bragg, N.C.



Soldiers board the aircraft which will take them to Kuwait. More than 1000 Soldiers deployed the first week of January.

VOICES AND VIEWPOINTS

Marne Six Sends

Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr.

3rd Inf. Div. commanding general

The Marne team continues our deployment to Kuwait and Iraq in support of our assigned mission as part of the global war on terror.

Living conditions at our camps in the open desert are pretty good. Our Soldiers have dry accommodations, more than enough food to eat, opportunities for physical training, facilities for contacting

home and taking care of other basic individual needs.

Our Soldiers are working hard at receiving the steady stream of equipment as our vehicles and other equipment arrive into theater.

Our Soldiers have done outstanding work getting the Marne team and our equipment out of the air and sea ports and into the camps.

Additionally, our thanks go to the local communities back home who in your own way always provide

tremendous support to our Soldiers and families.

The best way to take care of our Soldiers is to continue tough and realistic training. Our units are hitting the firing ranges and conducting other training critical to our future mission as we make final preparations for our mission in Iraq.

Tragically, the division suffered the loss of one of our AH-64 pilots in 3-3 AVN BN in a recent training accident. Our prayers and condolences go out to the family of Capt. Joe Lusk. I would

also ask all of you for your prayers in support of CW2 Matthew Uran who was injured in the crash.

Our mission now is to complete our training program, receive and make sure our equipment is ready as we begin movement forward into Iraq.

Marne Soldiers are well-trained, well-led and very focused. I know you are proud of them.

Mission.....Soldiers
.....Teamwork

"Rock of the Marne!"

Quiet Hero ...

Kathleen Mills

Special to The Frontline

She wakes very early, he's leaving today, She will stand tall and proud as he's walking away. He glances back warmly at his children and wife, Knowing they will

bravely carry on with their life.

Her strength and her courage only one understands, He is walking away with her heart in his hands.

For he knows that without it he would be lost, But they both know

freedom comes at a cost.

She walks away holding her children so close, Swallowing tears for the one she loves most.

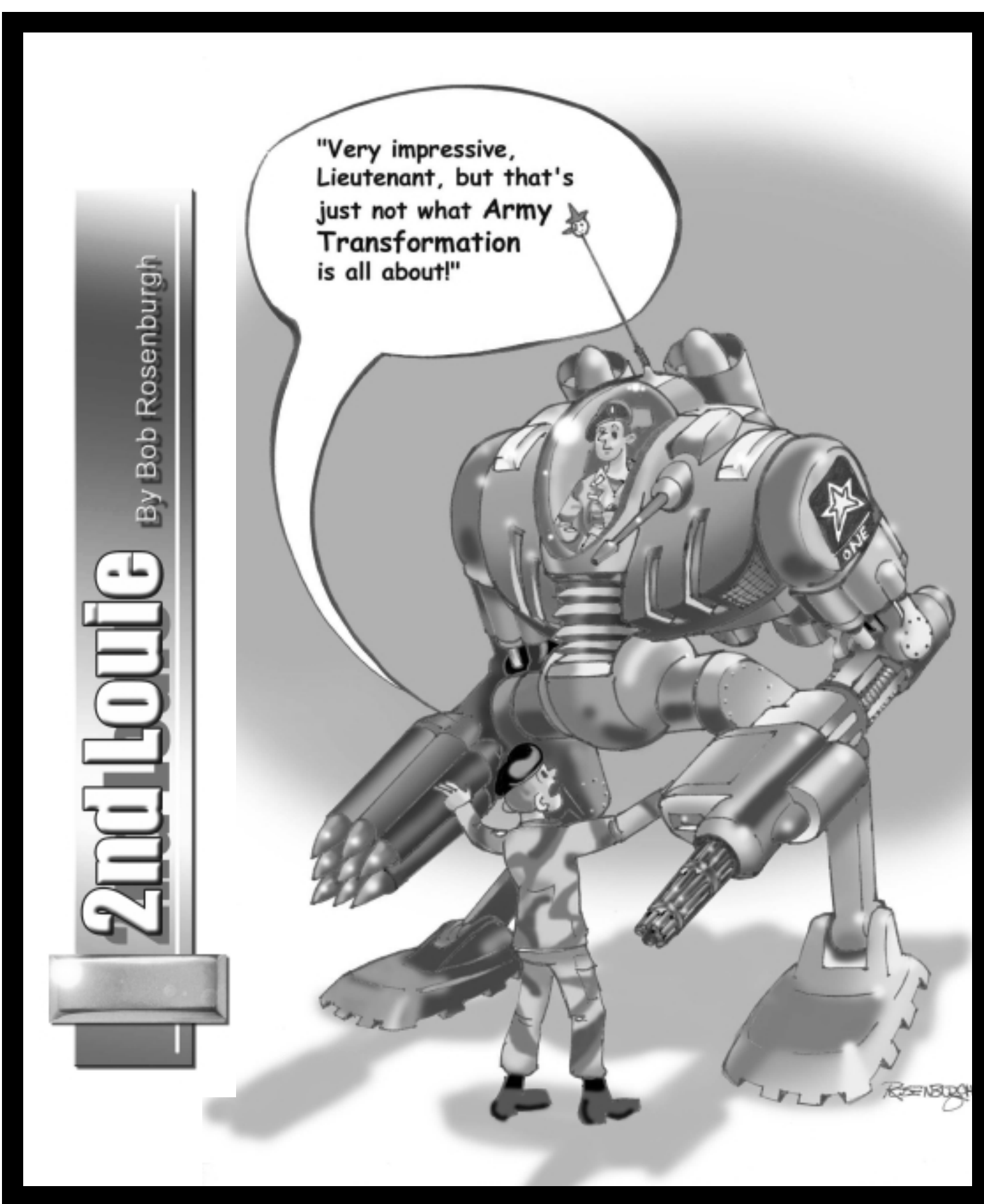
This quiet hero does not walk into war, She soldiers on behind her front

door. She will move through her life the wind at her back, Determined to keep her family on track. Her tears fall in silence while she lies in her bed, Her fear is right there but nothing is said.

She will ask that no metals be pinned to her chest.

Her husbands safe return her only request.

Few understand her commitment, her life, She is the quiet hero, the brave Soldier's wife.



CORRECTION

The Frontline apologizes for an error in the Jan. 20 issue. On page 2A, Audie Murphy's memory still lives on, the caption reading "Capt. Timothy A. Terese presents Turner...." should be "Turner presents Capt. Terese."

Marne Voice

THE FRONTLINE

Readers respond to the question:

"What is the most beneficial thing about being on rear detachment?"

"There really is no benefit because the ones left behind are unable to be with their counterparts and compadres."

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Carr
MEDDAC

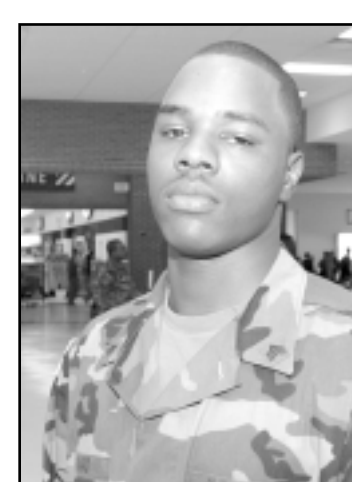


"I can go to school and spend time with my family."

Spc. Erika Pendleton
293rd MP Co.

"To provide support to the Soldiers who aren't deployed, as well as their families."

Sgt. 1st Class Lee Pontiflet
A Co., 3rd SSB



"Less traffic in the morning."

Sgt. Cliff Hurd
A Co., Hq. Cmd.

"I am able to go to school."

Spc. Samantha Walker
3rd SSB



"Being able to support the troops deployed and maintaining the home-front."

Spc. Lanetta White
92nd Eng.

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Write a letter to the editor!

Send to:
Public Affairs Office
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894 William H. Wilson Ave.
Building 600C
Fort Stewart, Ga. 31314-4941
or fax it to 912-767-9366.

THE FRONTLINE

MILITARY NEWS: 767-3440
ADVERTISING: (912) 368-0526
Volume 20, Number 4
Publisher
3rd Infantry Division Commander —
Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr.

Consolidated Public Affairs Office

This civilian enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Frontline are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or U.S. Forces Command. It is published weekly using offset printing by the Public Affairs Office, Fort Stewart, Georgia

Director — Lt. Col. Clifford J. Kent
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31314-5000. Phone number: 912-767-3440 or 767-8072
Printed circulation up to 22,000. All editorial content of the Frontline newspaper is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Public Affairs Office of Fort Stewart, Georgia and the 3d Infantry Division and is printed by Morris Newspaper Corporation of Hinesville, Inc. a private firm in no

1st Bde. — Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
2nd Bde. — Spc. Ben Brody
3rd Bde. — Pvt. James E. Lewis
4th Bde. — Sgt. James Strine
4th Bde. — Pvt. Dan Balda
Hunter Public Affairs Office
Chief — Steven Hart
Staff writer — Catherine Caruso
Advertising Staff
Advertising Manager — Maryann Wilson
Frontline Production Manager — Juanita Vandenbosch

way connected with the Department of the Army, under exclusive written contract with Fort Stewart, Georgia. The civilian printer is responsible for commercial advertising. Subscription rates are \$9 for three months, \$16 for six months and \$30 for 12 months. Rates are for third class mail, inside the continental U.S.

Senior leaders take Soldiers to Iraq

Catherine Caruso
Hunter PAO

The 3rd Infantry Division is headed back to Iraq. As the division commander and command sergeant major carried the colors through Hunter Army Airfield's Truscott terminal and prepared to deploy with 250 of their troops, they shared some thoughts on the Soldiers they have led in training and will lead through the coming year in Iraq.

"I am the command sergeant major of one of the greatest divisions in the world today," 3rd Inf. Div. Command Sgt. Major William Grant told reporters, shortly before boarding his flight Jan. 20.

The 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers are trained and ready for every and any challenge in bringing stability and security to newly-free Iraq, he said.

The Marne soldiers fought and won the war, and are trained and ready to win the peace, said Maj. Gen. William Webster, 3rd

Inf. Div. commanding general, during a brief press conference held at the terminal.

Webster served as deputy commander of ground forces when the division served as the "tip of the spear" during OIF 1.

"We intensified our training this year to get more Soldiers on the ranges, and get them more confident and competent on their assigned weapons... as we have gone through the year we have modified our training a great deal, putting our Soldiers in urban environments, and dealing with insurgents," Webster said. "Millions more rounds were fired by our Soldiers over the past year, than before we deployed the first time."

What will happen after Iraq's upcoming election remains uncertain, but Webster said he knows exactly what to expect from his troops when the division's colors are unfurled.

"They are part of a great team," he said. "And when they are part of a great team, they can do great things."



Photos by Catherine Caruso

(Above) Maj. Gen. William Webster, commanding general, boards a Middle East-bound 747. The "tip of the spear" during the U.S. led invasion that deposed Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, the 3rd Inf. Div. is now returning to assist the new Iraqi government establish security and enforce order in it's new democratic society.

(Left) Soldiers boarding their flight at Hunter Army Airfield.



GMH gives thanks, support

Special to The Frontline
GMH Military Housing

GMH Military Housing would like to express our gratitude to each and every soldier and their families that are deploying to OIF 3 as well as the Soldiers left behind to man the Fort.

Fort Stewart is your home. There is no better sense of camaraderie then being in a community of families who are sharing your same experience. At GMH, we realize the importance of a

support system. Some of those support systems are your family readiness group, your battalion rear detachment and waiting spouse support groups. Your FRG group will be paramount in the coming year for reliable information.

GMH will be working closely with both the Battalion rear detachment and your FRG leaders to help provide you the best source of information. During the up coming year, GMH has an entire social calendar planned with exciting

activities for the whole family.

For those military families considering going home to be with their loved ones during this difficult time, we would like to remind you that you don't have to give up your home in the process.

At GMH, we understand that it is hard to say goodbye not only to your loved ones but also to neighbors and friends that you have grown attached to while living at Fort Stewart. Your home will be ready and waiting for your fami-

ly when your spouse returns from their mission. No house hunting — No waiting list — No worries. Come back to a familiar place. Welcome home.

During this difficult time, GMH has immediate openings in our two bedroom homes. We would like offer the opportunity to live in family housing and have the support of the community. Please stop by the Community Management Office located at 71 West Bultman Ave., Bldg. 1193 or call one of our Leasing Specialist at 408.2460.

IED

from page 1A

prevent people from seeing the wires and explosives.

IED sweep teams patrol the roads and check for IEDs.

According to Alt, most of the insurgents are placing IEDs at night in three stages.

One person will do a recon with some form of plausible denial, such as pulling over to the side of the road and popping the hood of his car.

With the cover of darkness, the second man digs the hole for the IED and leaves before he is noticed. Alt said this is usually done around midnight.

The last group sets up the IED and moves to a concealed location to set off the device.

"The three stages eliminate the amount of time they are next to the MSR," Alt said.

To illustrate how many people are involved in one of these operations, Alt explained how the 1st Cavalry Division in

one night captured 16 insurgents preparing an IED site.

"They are putting these devices in a hurry so they don't get caught," Alt said. "We have found rounds that were partially buried."

But be careful because a partially buried IED can be part of a bait and switch where the actual device is buried on the other side of the road.

"Your best bet is to split your distance between the sides of the roads, which is pretty easy on the MSRs because there are four lanes," Alt said.

IEDs can be made out of almost anything, from trash to Pepsi cans. There are three parts to an IED – the casing, which covers the device, the main charge and the initiating device.

The main charge can be made using artillery rounds and other unexploded ordnance or military and commercial grade explosives.

"Insurgents favor using military ord-

nance because there are so many unknown caches in Iraq," Alt said.

The device's detonator can either be a command wire, where the trigger is connected by a wire; a remote, where the trigger can range from a cell phone to a garage door opener; or a timer.

The remote trigger is the most used because it's easily concealed, Alt said. Once the device is wired, the only part showing is a five- to six-inch antenna. Depending on what the insurgents use as the detonator, they can be 150 to 200 meters away.

With a command wire, there will be at least one wire running from the device to the firing point.

A sign that an IED may be present is a change in the environment, such as a new sign, fresh cement or freshly dug dirt on the side of the road.

One tactic the insurgents use will be to remove a section of a curb than lay new cement over the spot, according to Alt.

Wires often can be seen running from the new concrete because the insurgents are unable to dig up the entire sidewalk to conceal them.

"If you find an indicator of an IED, don't spend extra time around the area. Report it and secure the area if possible," Alt said.

Timed IEDs are virtually impossible to use against a convoy, Alt said. They are mostly used at entry control points and to fire mortars and rockets into the camps.

IEDs have steadily increased since January 2004. In the past year, 11,169 devices were found or detonated. 4,645 were found, 4,608 were ineffective or caused no injuries, 220 caused deaths and 1,496 detonated and wounded Soldiers.

"We cannot set trends," Alt said. "The insurgents will see and use them against us. Pattern development by coalition forces is the number-one reason for successful IED attacks by the enemy," Alt said.

Beware of Apparent Scam

Press Release

Special to The Frontline

It seems that a number of residents in and around our area may have been the victims of an apparent scam. Coastal Communications has received several calls from customers who reported receiving frightening phone calls that have come at all hours of the day and night in the form of a collect call.

When the call comes in, the person answering is told that someone they know has been injured and that they need to accept a collect call at a cost of \$5.00 (this amount could vary depending upon the phone call). When the call is accepted, the caller gives instructions to call a doctor at a certain telephone number to find out more information about the injured person. The

instructions are to dial *72 followed by a long distance number. After following these instructions, the call is connected to a voicemail box of an unidentified person or persons.

Not only is this a terribly frightening experience for the victim but also unbeknown to them, dialing *72 followed by a telephone number will activate their calling feature, Call Forwarding, where all of their subsequent incoming calls are forwarded directly to the number dialed using *72.

Call Forwarding is a legitimate and very popular feature that may be purchased from Coastal Communications, or other communications providers, in conjunction with telephone service. The feature is designed for convenience so that consumers may forward

their phone calls to follow them wherever they go so they never miss important calls. Once activated, the feature may be deactivated at any time by simply dialing *73.

However, under the guise of this scam, the victims not only may be charged for a collect call, but all calls forwarded to a long distance number will appear as toll charges on their bills. Coastal Communications is working diligently with the companies through which the calls are billed to assist their customers who have been victims of this apparent scam.

If you receive, or have received, suspicious telephone calls such as these, please notify Coastal Communications or any other communications provider with whom you have phone service.

Sustainability Management System Statement

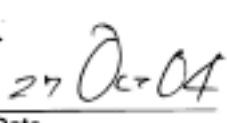
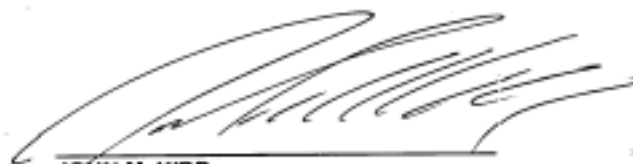
The mission of Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield (HAAF) is to train and rapidly deploy heavy, armored forces as well as elite light fighters by air, land and sea to conduct mobile, combined arms offensive and defensive operations worldwide. To ensure the continuing ability to perform this critical mission, the soldiers, civilians and contracted personnel working on Fort Stewart/HAAF must: prevent pollution; conserve natural resources; comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations; and strive to continually improve environmental stewardship. Fort Stewart/HAAF is committed to simultaneously optimizing performance of the mission, well-being of soldiers, family members and the surrounding communities, and impact on the environment. To achieve this goal, Fort Stewart/HAAF will establish, implement and maintain an effective, integrated Sustainability Management System.

Our Policy:

Sustainable Fort Stewart/HAAF

R – RESOURCES: Pollution Prevention & Natural Resources
O – OPTIMIZE: MISSION, Well-Being & Environment
C – COMPLIANCE
K – KEEP IMPROVING

of the Marne!



JOHN M. KIDD
Colonel, IN
Garrison Commander

Date

OIF

from page 1A

overwhelmed.”

Norfus advised against counting down the time a Soldier will be deployed, as that would also cause unnecessary frustration.

“Don’t try to count the days you are here either because you will lose focus on the mission,” Norfus said. “That’s when you’ll get yourself hurt.”

Soldiers who are experiencing their first deployment have worries and concerns about being away from home and their loved ones for an extended period of time.

“I’m recently married, and being away from my wife during our first year of marriage is a bit upsetting,” said Pfc. Chris Romanello, an early warning radar operator. “I hear that the first year of marriage is critical, but I know that I can’t dwell on things going on at home. I have to focus on the mission at hand so I can get back to her safe and sound.”

Senior noncommissioned officers who have faced these situations before say it all leads back to training and trust in your chain of command. They feel that these key elements will be the deciding factor in the Soldiers’ frame of mind while they are here.

“It’s not as bad as it seems,” said Sgt. Maj. Johnny Felton. “If you have faith in your training, and you believe in the wisdom and guidance of your NCOs, then you will be successful in your mission.”

ARMOR

from page 1A

due to the fact they have hired nearly 30 new contractors, Cannon said.

The contractors are from all over America, and will stay for up to four months, Cannon added. To become a contractor, one only needs to be a certified mechanic.

Adding armor to the vehicles not only adds protection from small arms fire and IEDs, but provides Soldiers with a heightened sense of security during convoy operations.

“The armor gives

the Soldiers a sense of security, and it has been proven to save lives. This armor will give Soldiers side protection, especially from IEDs,” Cannon said. “Just looking at it, you can tell it will withstand some rounds also, and it will give them the protection that they need when they go to Iraq. Soldiers have brought back examples of how the armor has helped them stay alive. In the back we have some windshields and side windows that have withstood an IED blast.”

SKIES

from page 1A

Heat can also affect helicopter performance. Though temperatures in Kuwait are mild now, the summer months can sometimes lodge thermometers in the triple digits.

“Heat decreases our power margin,” said A Co., 2/3 Avn. Pilot Chief Warrant Officer Phillip Hosey, of Hattiesburg, Miss. “There’s a lot more involved in power management when it gets really hot.”

While the unit bides its time in Kuwait, some of the Soldiers are already gearing up for the deployment which could last a year or more.

“We’re looking forward to a busy year to make it go fast,” said Aurora, Colo., native Sgt. Dennis Burdette, B Co., 2/3 Avn, flight engineer. “The way back to Savannah is through

Baghdad. The sooner this year is through, the sooner I can get home to my wife and kids.”

Like roughly one-fourth of his unit, Burdette is a OIF 1 veteran and said he plans to apply the lessons he learned at the start of the conflict to this rotation.

“I’ll tell my younger Soldiers to pay attention and keep their heads on the swivel, always checking 360 degrees around them at any given time,” he said.

As he tied down one of the Blackhawk rotors, Hosey said he thinks about what it will be like on the other side of the border.

He added, “I have a lot of respect for the danger, but I’m not too worried, as long as we do things the way we’re supposed to; the way we’ve been training back in the U.S.”

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class David Abrams

(Above) Sgt. Dennis Burdette, B Co., 2nd General Support Aviation Bn., 3rd Aviation Bde., a flight engineer, performs maintenance on one of the unit’s CH-47 Chinook helicopters before taking it out on a training mission Jan. 20. (Right) Another 2nd General Support Aviation battalion Soldier works on an Aviation Brigade helicopter.



Winn receives award

Laurie Kemp
Winn Public Affairs

Winn Army Community Hospital received the Army Surgeon General's Excalibur Award Jan. 24 for the creation of the Department of Mobilization Medical Services.

Col. (Dr.) Joe Barthel, hospital commander, received the award from Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley at the 2005 TRICARE Conference held in Washington, D.C.

The Department of Mobilization Medical Services was established in October 2003, after the leadership at Winn recognized the need for additional help to adequately support all the medical demands of a division deploying, mobilizing and demobilizing troops, while also providing care for the families enrolled at the hospital.

"The Department of Mobilization Medical Services has produced a permanent, dedicated and professional staff that provides the best and most timely medical care ... for mobilized and deploying Soldiers," Barthel said.

The department encompasses the SRC, or Soldier Readiness Processing site, a full-time Troop Medical Clinic for the National

Guard Training Area and the Mobilization Consultation and Continuity Clinic, also known at TMC #4, which is dedicated to the care of medical holdover soldiers.

According to Barthel, the greatest accomplishment of the DMMS is the Army policy changes its creation helped implement.

"The creation of the DMMS enabled the re-evaluation of all processes and procedures involved in mobilizing and demobilizing troops," Barthel said. "This immediately led to policy changes, including the recommendation to the DA (Department of the Army) for a 25 day AT (active-duty for training) period to allow Soldiers to be properly evaluated and sent home if medically unfit."

The Excalibur Award is designed to formally recognize teams and organizations that have implemented improvements and innovations which have increased the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and processes within the Army Medical Department. Along with recognizing excellence, the award program promotes the long-range benefits of sharing information, good ideas and best practices throughout the AMEDD.



Sgt. James A. Strine

Janie Robins holds her son, Jeffery, as he receives a flu shot Tuesday. There will be another opportunity for any identification card holders to receive flu shots, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Fort Stewart PX and Feb. 1, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Hunter PX.



DPW Environmental Division

Winners of the 4th Quarter Recycling Incentive Award was presented to 4th Brigade, 87th Division, Fort Stewart and 224th Military Intelligence Battalion at Hunter.

CENTCOM News

42 suspected insurgents detain

MOSUL — Multi-National Forces from 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), detained forty-two people during operations in northern Iraq on Jan. 22.

Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, detained forty-one people suspected of anti-Iraqi activity while conducting cordon and search operations north of Mosul. Suspects are in custody with no MNF injuries reported.

Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, detained an individual suspected of anti-Iraqi activity in eastern Mosul. Suspect is in custody with no MNF injuries reported.

Military officials have said the Mosul area is becoming safer with each seizure and removal of dangerous weapons and detention of anti-Iraqi insurgents. Since Jan. 5, Iraqi Security Forces and Multi-National Forces have detained 249 people and confiscated numerous weapons and munitions.

Readiness exercise focuses on upcoming elections

TIKRIT — With an eye to the upcoming Iraqi national elections, Joint Coordination Centers in the Salah Ad Din Province, along with the Provincial Joint Coordination Center and other Iraqi entities, participated in a readiness exercise Jan 17 to 19.

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team's civil affair's section and Salah Ad Din Provincial Joint Coordination Center hosted the readiness exercise at the PJCC in Tikrit.

The local JCCs in the cities of Ash Sharqat, Bayji, Tikrit, Ad Dawr, Samarra, Balad, Ad Dujayl, Ad Duliya and Tuz participated in the three-day event. In addition, the Iraqi Police Service, Iraqi Army, Iraqi Army bomb disposal units, Force Protection Services, International Election Commission for Iraq, Iraqi Ministry of Health and various emergency services also took part.

The goal of the exercise was “to prepare the Provincial JCC and the local JCCs in the major cities of Salah Ad Din Province for the upcoming Iraqi National Elections,” said Master Sgt. Terry L. McKinney, 2nd BCT's PJCC liaison officer.

The Houston, Texas, resident said the readiness exercise was important because it helped to prepare the provincial and city governments for any emergency situation that might arise during the upcoming elections.



Sgt. Jeremiah Johnson

Staff Sgt. Saua Maiava, (left), with Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion 11th Field Artillery, discusses plans for election security with Police Chief, Lt. Col. Osman Abdulla, (right) outside of the polling site in the village of Qarah Anjir, Iraq, on Jan. 22, 2005. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. April L. Johnson)

“Additionally, it allowed us to stress all our forms of communications to ensure that there are multiple ways that we can communicate from the province to the Iraqi National Headquarters and also to the local cities in the province,” he said.

Three goals were achieved by holding the readiness exercise, he said. Communications between the provincial and local JCCs were vastly improved, response time for emergency services increased and Iraqi Security Forces are ready to respond to anti-Iraqi forces threats and secure election sites throughout the province.

Although this was the fourth time such a readiness exercise was held, the PJCC liaison officer said it was significant because the event focused on “synchronizing all the efforts from governmental and security elements in the province to communicate and work together.”

U.S. forces detail 59 suspects in Al Anbar province

Marines and Soldiers from the 1st Marine Division of the I Marine Expeditionary Force detained 59 sus-

pected insurgents and seized several weapons caches during operations throughout Al Anbar Province over the past 48 hours.

Weapons and munitions seized included a rocket-propelled grenade round, two RPG launchers, four AK-47 assault rifles, 10 AK-47 magazines, a pistol, 70 mortar fuses, 71 primers, 70 mortar rounds, 30 grenade fuses, a flame thrower and bomb-making material.

A car, boat and insurgent propaganda were also seized with the weapons and munitions.

Second Soldier sentenced in interpreter's death

CAMP LIBERTY — A 1st Cavalry Division Soldier was convicted on January 22 of one count of making a false statement and one count of accessory-after-the-fact involuntary manslaughter during a general court martial at the division's courthouse here.

Spc. Rami Dajani, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, pleaded guilty to

both charges. He chose a trial by military judge alone, rather than by court members.

Dajani was also charged with one count of involuntary manslaughter, which was later dropped.

The convictions stem from a Nov. 24, 2004, incident, when Dajani supplied a handgun to a fellow Soldier who then killed an interpreter by shooting her in the head.

Later that day, Dajani made an official statement with the intent to deceive, denying involvement in the death of a civilian interpreter.

The judge spent one hour deliberating and returned with a decision to sentence Dajani to 18 months confinement, reduction to the lowest enlisted pay grade (private/E-1) and a bad conduct discharge.

Cavalry trooper convicted of manslaughter

CAMP LIBERTY — A 1st Cavalry Division Soldier was convicted on Jan. 22 of one count of involuntary manslaughter and one count of making a false statement during a general court martial at the division's courthouse.

Spc. Charley L. Hooser, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, was sentenced to three years confinement, reduction to the lowest enlisted pay grade (private/E-1) and given a bad conduct discharge.

The convictions stem from an incident on Nov. 24, when Hooser killed an interpreter, shooting her in the head. Later that day, he made an official statement with the intent to deceive, denying involvement in the death of the civilian interpreter.

Hooser chose a trial by military judge alone rather than by court members. The judge spent one hour deliberating and returned with a guilty verdict and the sentence.

Insurgents captured

BAGHDAD — Soldiers from the Iraqi Army's 1st Division, 1st Battalion, received mortar fire in Mosul on Jan. 21.

The Soldiers observed insurgents firing a mortar from about 500 meters away and engaged the enemy with direct fire. They found one abandoned 82 mm mortar tube and captured an insurgent.

While searching a house in the vicinity, Iraqi Soldiers engaged the enemy again and captured one insurgent who was using a cell phone to provide positions for attacks. A search of a nearby school yielded one sniper rifle.

POLICE REPORTS

• **Subject:** Family member, 39-year-old male
• **Charge:** Leaving motor vehicle unattended
• **Location:** Hunter

• **Subject:** Sergeant, 23-year-old male, Div. Sup. Bde.
• **Charges:** Wrongful possession of cocaine, wrongful use of cocaine
• **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Sergeant, 26-year-old male, Avn. Bde.
• **Charge:** Simple assault
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Privgate, 25-year-old male, 4th Bde.
• **Charges:** Aggravated assault, communicating a threat, disobeying a superior commissioned officer
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Private, 18-year-old male, 2nd Bde.
• **Charge:** Driving on a suspended license
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Specialist, 22-year-old male, separate unit
• **Charge:** Assault consummated by a battery
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Private, 19-year-old male and Private 1st Class, 2nd Bde.
• **Charge:** Rape
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Sergeant, 30-year-old male, 2nd Bde.
• **Charge:** Driving on suspended license
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Specialist, 22-year-old male, 4th Bde.
• **Charges:** Drunk and disorderly, damage to government property
• **Location:** Fort Stewart



• **Subject:** Sergeant, 26-year-old male, 1st Bde.
• **Charges:** Driving under the influence, failure to maintain lane, laying drag
• **Location:** Richmond Hill

• **Subject:** Specialist, 26-year-old male, Div. Sup. Bde.
• **Charge:** Simple battery
• **Location:** Hinesville

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 24-year-old male, Fires Bde.
• **Charges:** Driving while license suspended, expired tags
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Private, 23-year-old male, 2nd Bde.
• **Charge:** False reporting of a crime
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Specialist, 21-year-old male, 4th Bde.
• **Charges:** Failure to obey a traffic control device, fleeing the scene of an accident

• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Private, 9-year-old male, 4th Bde.
• **Charges:** Driving under the influence, failure to maintain lane, speeding 60/45
• **Location:** Hinesville

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 23-year-old male, 2nd Bde.
• **Charge:** Wrongful possession of marijuana
• **Location:** Walthourville

• **Subject:** Sergeant, 26-year-old male, separate unit
• **Charge:** Aggravated battery
• **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Specialist, 30-year-old male, separate unit
• **Charges:** Driving under the influence, DUI less safe, speeding 60/40
• **Location:** Thunderbolt

• **Subject:** Specialist, 20-

year-old male, 2nd Bde.
• **Charges:** Altering of military identification, drinnking underage
• **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 30-year-old male, 2nd Bde.
• **Charge:** Probation violation
• **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Private, 21-year-old male, 4th Bde.
• **Charges:** Criminal trespassing, obstruction by hindering, disorderly conduct
• **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Private, 19-year-old male, 4th Bde.
• **Charges:** Disorderly conduct, obstruction of justice
• **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Specialist, 23-year-old male, 4th Bde.
• **Charges:** Driving under the influence, driving wrong way on one-way street
• **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Specialist, 24-year-old male, separate unit
• **Charges:** Driving under the influence, speeding 80/55
• **Location:** Savannah

• **Subject:** Family member, 22-year-old female
• **Charge:** Theft by shoplifting
• **Location:** Hunter

• **Subject:** Private, 21-year-old male, 2nd Bde.
• **Charges:** Driving while license suspended
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

• **Subject:** Private, 21-year-old male, separate unit
• **Charge:** Failure to obey lawful order
• **Location:** Fort Stewart

Courts-Martial

The following cases were tried by special courts-martial or general courts martial at Fort Stewart with the following results:

Special Courts-Martial

United States v. Pvt. Jose Marte, 632nd Maintenance Company, Fort Stewart, Ga. On Dec. 6, the military judge found Marte guilty of cocaine usage. The military judge sentenced Marte to: be confined for 5 months and bad-conduct discharge.

General Courts-Martial

United States v. Pvt. Wayne Linke, 3/7 Cavalry Regiment, Fort Stewart, Ga. On Dec. 9, the military judge found Linke guilty of AWOL, house-breaking, larceny of a laptop computer and vehicle, fleeing the scene of an accident and damaging military property. The military judge sentenced Linke to: be confined for 18 months, reduction to E-1, total forfeitures and a bad-conduct discharge.

United States v. Capt. Mark K. Schenck, HHC, 2/7 Infantry Battalion, Fort Stewart, Ga. On Dec. 7, the military judge found Schenck guilty of disposing of five sets of SAPI plates. The military judge sentenced Schenck to: receive reprimand, be confined for 45 days, and dismissed from the service.

United States v. Spc. Jason Stanford, HHC, 3/69 Armor Regiment, Fort Stewart, Ga. On Jan. 13, the military judge found Stanford guilty of attempted rape of a child under 12 years of age, assault ona child under 16 and indecent acts with a child. The military judge sentenced Stanford to: be confined for 72 months, forfeiture of \$400 per month for 72 months, reduction to E-1 and a dishonorable discharge.

Smarter Soldiers educating the Army

Catherine Caruso

Hunter PAO

As Fort Stewart prepares to unveil its new, \$10.5 million education center, The Frontline is taking a closer look at why the Army is so committed to investing in the education of its force. This article is part two of a three-part series.

Christine Shepherd started taking courses at Fort Stewart's Education Center as Private Sheppard in 1997.

While serving with the 3rd Infantry Division as a medic, through her deployments to Kuwait for operations Desert Fox and Desert Spring, and during an SFOR rotation to Bosnia, she worked her way through college, a few credits at a time.

"It started as a way to earn promotion points. Then you get to fifty and say 'hey, I could get an associate's degree.' Then it was 'hey, if I get 90, I can go to (Officer Candidate School).'"

Lt. Shepherd is now enrolled in her final semester at Columbia College.

She expects to complete her Bachelor's degree in business management this March.

Access to the means to pursue higher education goals is one of the most-cited reasons Soldiers enlist, said David Nalisnick, director of testing at Fort Stewart's Education Center.

"It's also one of the biggest reasons they leave," he said.

The Army, and the Fort Stewart Education Center, are finding more and more ways to help soldiers do both.

Tony Kittrell retired from the military as a warrant officer, but a service-related back injury made it hard to continue a career in logistics.

When the Veteran's Administration offered to help him make a move into another, less physical, field, he could have taken classes anywhere. But he chose to take them through a program offered at Fort Stewart.

"When I joined the Army, they didn't encourage you to go beyond an associate's degree if you were enlisted. So, I got two of those," he said. "But in the 'real world,' you need to have at least a bachelor's degree to compete."

During the day, Retha Barron is a civil service employee at Fort Stewart. On Monday nights, she leads a lively busi-



Catherine Caruso

Lt. Christine Shepherd and retired Warrant Officer Tony Kittrell participate in a class discussion for Retha Barron's section of Columbia College course MGT 254, Business Communications, at the Fort Stewart Education Center.

ness communications class.

Soldier-students like Kittrell and Shepherd are a big reason she continues to teach, and why she prefers to teach programs offered through the military.

"People who come through my classroom here are very interested in the quality of the education they are getting, and they push me to do even more as an educator," she said. "It's a really good system for teaching the non-traditional student."

As the volunteer Army evolves, an ever-higher percentage of enlistees are making a career of military service. Increasingly, NCO career tracks include two year and four year degrees. More and more officers are pursuing graduate work that is relevant to their fields.

Others plan to enter the civilian workforce after their tour of duty ends. And even career Soldiers often retire before they've entered middle age.

"If you join the Army at age 20, you could retire at 40 and have a full 20 or 30

years to pursue a second career," Nalisnick said. "And while you are in the Army, education improves you as a Soldier."

College courses expose Soldiers to new ideas, improves their verbal and written communication skills, and develops abilities in critical thinking and higher-reasoning, he said.

Those are skills that are valuable whether you are leading Soldiers on the battlefield or managing employees from a boardroom.

After taking some core requirements for promotion points, Shepherd got her first taste of what would become her major, business management, taking electives at the University of Maryland while she was in Bosnia.

She took a business ethics course, and became fascinated with values and how they are sometimes corrupted.

"Then I took a philosophy course, and learned about utilitarianism, how some

people are motivated by their own self-interest instead of those of society as a whole. And I saw how philosophy and ethics go hand in hand. And then there were people talking about how to create a culture of values in the business world, and holding corporate executives to a higher standard now, so that managers in the future won't be so tempted to take advantage of their shareholders. And all that went with what I had already learned about values from the Army," Shepherd said.

Shepherd was promoted to E-6 shortly before reporting to OCS, and is a single mother to three children.

"It's not always easy, but it is possible. You can't do it by yourself, but the people at the education center have been there to support me every step of the way," she said.

And even the smartest Soldiers can be intimidated by academia.

Education Center student Melissa Crook tested into an E-5 rate as an Aviation Electrician when she was in the Navy.

But she was hesitant about signing up for her first college course, an introductory history class.

"I was scared, because I haven't been in school for a few years. I'm a hands-on person, so I was nervous," she said, confessing she only started to look into using her GI Bill benefits to pursue a degree after her husband got orders to Fort Stewart, and she was unable to find a job in the area that paid much more than minimum wage.

"I've only been going for a week, but, it's not as bad as I expected," she said. "My teachers have been pretty encouraging."

Nalisnick said he wants leaders to make sure their Soldiers are aware of the educational services the center has to offer- from choosing a degree program that suits their career goals, to navigating a course plan through PCS moves and deployments, to finding and applying for financial aid before they leave the service.

"Send them to our briefing, one hour on Wednesday morning, as part of their in-processing. Encourage them to take advantage of our programs," he said. "Don't let the first time they find out we're here be when they need us to initial a block on their out-processing form."

Heroes helping heroes ... DOD lauds blood donors

Army News Service

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — January is National Volunteer Blood Donor Month, and the Armed Services Blood Program joins Dr. William Winkenwerder, Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, in commending those who have taken the time to save lives.

"I would like to extend my gratitude to those who have donated blood to the donor centers of the ASBP throughout its 51 years of operation," said Winkenwerder. "Since the onset of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring

Freedom, thousands of units have been transfused to those injured in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"As we continue to fight the Global War on Terrorism, the need for donors has never been more critical," he added.

Navy Cmdr. Michael Libby, ASBPO director, echoed Winkenwerder.

"ASBP personnel collect and process blood, but it is the dedicated donors committed to helping others that truly provide for those in need, he emphasized.

Whether due to injuries or illness, military members and their families need blood every day.

More than 100,000 units of blood are transfused in military hospitals each year.

"The donors who give every day ensure blood will be there whenever it's needed, wherever it's needed," Libby said. "One month really isn't enough time to show the gratitude patients and their families feel for these lifesavers all year long, but it does give us a chance to acknowledge how special blood donors are."

Armed Services Blood Program blood donor centers conduct awards ceremonies and special events throughout the

blood donor month to show their appreciation to those who give blood to help save the lives of others.

"This caring and generous act saves lives, helps ensure the well being of America's armed forces, and provides family members with a unique opportunity to support America's fighting forces worldwide," Winkenwerder said. "Blood donors are heroes helping heroes."

The Armed Services Blood Program collects, processes, ships and stores blood products for military members and their families worldwide in peace and

war. Though there are civilian agencies that collect blood, the ASBP is the only organization operated by the military to meet military blood needs. Active-duty service members, reservists, retirees, family members, Department of Defense employees and government contractors are eligible to donate to the ASBP.

For more information on donating blood, or on National Volunteer Blood Donor Month activities at a donor center near you, visit the Armed Services Blood Program Web site at www.tricare.osd.mil/asbpo/donor_info/donor_centers.htm.

3ID IN BRIEF

Stewart

Ski Beech Mountain
Busses depart from Stewart Leisure Activities Center, Bldg. 443 on Jan. 22 at midnight and return Jan. 23 at 10 p.m. Costs include motel, ski lift and equipment rental. Adults \$180, children \$140 and children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
For more information, call 767-8609.

Universal Studios
Two day trip including transportation, two-day attraction ticket and lodging is scheduled for Feb. 20. Adult fare is \$150, children \$90 and anyone under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
Busses will depart at midnight from Bldg. 443. For more information, call 767-8609.

Bowling and Golf
Free bowling and shoe rental at Marne and Hunter Lanes, 1 to 5 p.m. for Soldiers and family members. No golf fees at Taylors Creek and Hunter Courses from 1 to 5 p.m. Golf cart rental, \$7 per person for 9 holes or \$12 per person for 18 holes.

Library
Childrens story hour Wednesday, 1 to 2 p.m. For more information, call 767-3753.

Indebtedness Claim
Anyone having claims against or who is indebted to the estate of Spc. George D.

Harrison, 293rd Military Police Co., Fort Stewart, Ga, should contact 1st Lt. Braden P. Stai, at 767-2186.

Red Cross CPR Instructors
If you are a current CPR/First Aid Instructor with the American Red Cross, you need to register with the Savannah Chapter — Liberty Branch to keep your certification current. You can call 876-3975 or visit the local office in the Winn-Dixie Shopping Center between Goodwill and Pro-Feet for more information.

Finance Location Change
As part of the preparation for deployment in support of OIF 3, the 3rd Finance Company will provide finance support to garrison units, MEDDAC and DEN-TAC from the finance section in the finance section located at the Soldiers Support Center.
All 3rd ID units will continue to receive Finance Support from the current Customer Service in Bldg. 9118 or the finance team located within the brigades.
For more information, call Capt. Langley or Master Sgt. Ramsey at 767-4680/5724.

Track and Field/Soccer
Registration begins Feb. 1 and is open and FREE to all current CYS membersx living on or off post. All children must have a current physical ion file at time of registration.
For more information call 767-2312/4371.

Hunter

Tax Center
The Tax Center located at the Legal Center, Bldg 1211, is now open 9 a.m. through 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, through April 14.
Call 303-3675/3697 to make an appointment, or for more information.

Rio Gate Expanded Hours
By popular demand, the Rio Gate at Hunter Army Airfield is now open 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week, for DOD decaled vehicles. Visitor passes are available at Wilson Gate, open 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Montgomery Gate, open 24 hours.

S-1 Center
Customer service hours for the Finance Support Center have changed. The center will be closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but will remain open with reduced hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 767-5335 or 767-5722.

DECA Scholarship
The commissary announces applications for the Defense Commissary Agency's 2005 Military Children Program Scholarship are due Feb. 13. This year's essay is "How has the heightened awareness of terrorism impacted your life?"
For more information, see www.militaryscholar.org.

Lighten Up at Hunter Club
"Lighten up" at Hunter Club. Buy a healthy meal and earn a

frequent purchase card stamp. Ten stamps equal prizes, such as free bowling or a free lunch. Then, enter your redeemed card in MWR's national drawing to compete for exciting prizes, like a free spa vacation or a home gym.

Spouses Club Luncheon
The Hunter Spouses Club will host a luncheon Feb. 8 at 11 a.m. at the Café at City Market Mrs. Lori O'Neill, HSC Advisor and Jazzercise Instructor, will share tips for a healthy new year. Also, pick up wreaths to decorate for spring auction. Cost is \$10, which includes your order off the menu and beverages.
To R.S.V.P., call Isabelle Harmon 927-5666 by Tuesday.

Universal Studios
Two day trip including transportation, two-day attraction ticket and lodging is scheduled for Feb. 20. Adult fare is \$150, children \$90 and anyone under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
Busses will depart at midnight from Bldg. 8454. For more information call 767-8609.

GMH Housing Available
Family housing is available for service members stationed at Hunter Army Airfield. There are units available for immediate occupancy, and several more expected within the month.
For more information call 459-2133.

Winn /Tuttle

Flu shots available at PX
Flu shots will be available 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday at Fort Stewart PX and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesday, at the Hunter PX.
For more information, call 370-6633.

Flu vaccine for all
Flu vaccine is now available for all beneficiaries at the immunization clinic. For more information, call the immunization clinic at 370-6633.

Newborn TRICARE Prime
Parents now have 60 days from the date of birth to enroll their newborn in TRICARE Prime. If the 60-day window is not met, the child will be automatically enrolled in TRICARE Standard.
You must enroll your child in DEERS before you can enroll into TRICARE. For more information, 767-4909 or 352-5726. Call TRICARE at 1-800-444-5445.

Walk to Winn Program
This 12-week walking program is designed to increase activity, water intake and fruit and vegetable consumption. Registration begins today and spaces are limited.
For more information call 370-5071 to reserve your place.

Strategies for Staying Healthy
This class offers strategies for staying healthy. Upon completion of the class, individuals will be given an over-the-counter pharmacy card for use at Winn and Tuttle.

The next class at Tuttle meets 10 to 11 a.m. Jan. 28. To register, call Community Health Nursing at 800-652-9221.

Ready to Quit Class
Ready to Quit is a pre-require site to the Tobacco Use Cessation program.
The next classes at Winn are 11 a.m. Feb. 9 and 11 a.m. Feb. 23. For more information, call 370-5071.

TRICARE Phone Numbers
For general health care information, you can call the Humana Military Audio Library at 877-217-7946.
If you have questions about TRICARE, you can call TRICARE at 800-444-5445 or the Health Benefits Office at 370-6633 or 800-652-9221.

Volunteer Orientation
The next mandatory volunteer orientation at Winn will be held 8:30 to 11 a.m. Feb. 3 in the Hospital Conference Room. Volunteers are welcome and needed in a variety of capacities.
For more information, call 370-6903.

Baby Basic Training
Baby Basic Training offers first time fathers-to-be the chance to ask questions and practice taking care of their child through hands-on training. The class, facilitated by a man.
The next class is 1 to 4 p.m. Feb. 2 at Social Work Services. To register, call 370-6779.

Marne TV

January 2005 Schedule

Marne TV can be found on Comcast Cable Channel 16 every weekday.
Tune in to the Marne Report six times a day for the latest from Stewart and Hunter.

5 a.m. Army Newswatch
5:30 a.m. MARNE REPORT
6:30 a.m. Air Force News
7 a.m. Navy News
7:30 a.m. Army Newswatch
8 a.m. MARNE REPORT
9 a.m. Air Force News
9:30 a.m. Navy News
11:30 a.m. Army Newswatch
Noon MARNE REPORT

1 p.m. Air Force News
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Civil affairs Soldiers begin tsunami relief work

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Army News Service

ROYAL THAI NAVAL AIR BASE, UTAPAO, Thailand — U.S. Army civil affairs Soldiers arrived the week of Jan. 18 to provide humanitarian assistance to those in Southeast Asia affected by the Dec. 26 tsunami, three weeks after more than 160,000 died and many more suffered in its wake.

A dozen Soldiers with the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion's (Airborne) Detachment 220 are at work in Thailand, Sri Lanka and Indonesia to assist Combined Support Force 536 with civil affairs and civil-military operations in support of Operation Unified Assistance, said Maj. Gerry Messmer, the detachment's commander.

The 96th CA Bn., an Army special operations unit based at Fort Bragg, N.C., is the service's only active-duty civil affairs outfit.

Messmer said the Soldiers are divided into three teams of four men each: two teams are Civil Affairs Teams — A and one is a Civil Affairs Team — B. CAT-As are operational, on-the-ground civil affairs teams, while a CAT-B is essentially a small civil affairs planning and operations headquarters. Each has a civil affairs officer, a team sergeant, an engineer and a medic.

The CAT-As are in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, while the CAT-B, Messmer's element, is stationed at the air base here, he said.

In both combat and peacetime operations, Army civil affairs

Soldiers routinely work with foreign aid agencies, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, and nongovernmental organizations to identify areas of greatest need. They are the military link between such organizations and those they desire to assist; often, the civil affairs Soldiers are the only force with the capability of conducting initial and extended need assessments in certain high-risk or hard-to-access areas, Messmer said.

Potential unified assistance civil affairs projects include reinvigorating the fishing industry, identifying build projects, debris cleanup and trauma counseling for families torn apart by the tsunami, he said.

“Probably the most important thing we can do here is convert the military pipeline into the civilian pipeline for long-term sustainment,” Messmer said, although “another important mission is relocating (displaced) people to their hometowns.”

Civil affairs Soldiers serve as a military commander's liaison with NGOs to do all that, and more.

Already, on its first day of work, the CAT-A in Sri Lanka identified 40 tons of relief supplies that were sitting unused in a warehouse.

In time, according to Messmer, after the media attention on the situation goes away and short-term conventional disaster relief operations are completed, there will still be plenty of work left for his Soldiers.

“For us, there is a potential for a

follow-on mission to support reconstruction projects (in the region),” Messmer said.

He added that no matter how the situation on the ground transforms, the civil affairs Soldiers are capable of self-sustaining in the region for up to six months or more.

“(The III Marine Expeditionary Force) could pick up and leave tomorrow, and we'd be able to continue on with our mission,” Messmer said.

That, Messmer said, is because the structure of his unit is ideal for the think-on-the-go nature of the large-scale humanitarian aid projects needed in this region.

“I really think four-man teams are best suited to a situation like this,” Messmer said. He said the teams' mobile, low profile nature allows them to accomplish a lot, while leaving little or no military footprint.

These same civil affairs Soldiers recently completed a six-month deployment to Afghanistan, and again are involved in a deployment with the potential to extend well into the future — for another six months, or more. Soldiers from the battalion are also deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

“You can't help but want to help when you see the level of devastation on the ground here,” Messmer said. “My guys are willing to put their lives on hold to do this.”



Courtesy photo

Soldiers from the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army special operations unit based at Fort Bragg, N.C., help load their equipment onto a C-130 aircraft at Royal Thai Naval Air Base, Utapao, Thailand, Jan. 11 while preparing to deploy to Sri Lanka in support of tsunami aid efforts.

Messmer said that his team's accomplishments in Southeast Asia would make their presence worthwhile, despite the high personal costs.

In any case, he said with a smile, it's not as if these busy civil affairs Soldiers would have had a choice anyway.

“As soon as I saw it on the news, I figured I should start packing. I actually got a warning order to get

ready that night,” Messmer said.

International efforts to minimize suffering and mitigate loss of life resulting from the effects of the earthquake and tsunami continue as the combined support force of host nations, civilian aid organizations and U.S. Department of Defense work together to provide humanitarian assistance in support of Operation Unified Assistance.